



Department of Homeland Security Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 18 February 2004

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



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www.whitehouse.gov/homeland

Daily Overview

- The Daily Herald reports a brokerage firm is offering a Blue Angels fighter jet for sale on auction site eBay, that is raising concern from government law enforcement agencies. (See item [4](#))
- Finextra.com reports e-mail fraud and phishing attacks grew by more than 50% in January, with an average of 5.7 new, unique attacks sent out to millions of consumers each day. (See item [8](#))
- The New York Times reports the Federal Aviation Administration says that it plans to propose a rule this fall that would require the airlines to cut the risk of fuel tank explosions like the one that destroyed T.W.A. Flight 800. (See item [12](#))
- Internet Security Systems has raised AlertCon to Level 2, due to an exploit code targeting the ASN.1 vulnerability, as well as a new issue associated with the unauthorized release of Microsoft source code. Please refer to the Internet Alert Dashboard.

DHS/IAIP Update *Fast Jump*

Production Industries: [Energy](#); [Chemical](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

Service Industries: [Banking and Finance](#); [Transportation](#); [Postal and Shipping](#)

Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture](#); [Food](#); [Water](#); [Public Health](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: Elevated, Cyber: Elevated

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://esisac.com>]

February 17, Dow Jones Business News — **Fewer oil finds spells more industry changes. Falling oil discovery rates will result in further industry consolidation in coming years, as well as new methods to maximize production of the remaining oil and gas,** said John Williams, exploration manager at oil company ConocoPhillips. "The oil industry is going to look a lot different from here on out," he told delegates at a conference Monday, February 16. **Williams said the bulk of future projects will consist of extracting oil from known reserves, rather than exploring for new oil.** He stressed that advances in technology can increase the amount of hydrocarbons found in exploration, unlock previously stranded deposits and increase the recovery rates from difficult reservoirs. Williams noted that consumption of hydrocarbons overtook discovery levels in 1990.

Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/djus/040217/1103000661_2.html

2. *February 17, science.newsfactor.com* — **Researchers putting information technology into electricity. For an electrical power grid prone to failures and much in need of high-tech upgrades, information technology (IT) may be the "it" solution, said researchers at an annual science meeting. "Information science and technology hold the keys to integrating smaller scale, distributed-energy resources with the generation, transmission and distribution components of the existing power grid," explained a panel of experts** that included researchers from Washington State University and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. Despite the power grid's status as a marvel of modern-day engineering, present-day technologies have placed greater demands on already overtaxed systems, leading to expensive outages that can cost upwards of US\$5 million per minute of down time, said Massoud Amin of the Electric Power Research Institute. "Infrastructure expansion has not kept up with demand," he added. One potential grid-friendly innovation, according to Robert Pratt of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, are "smart chips" in appliances that receive data over power lines and regulate usage in response to potential overload conditions. Security enhancement also will be a top consideration. "In all the IT we're talking about, security must be incorporated into the architecture — not simply slapped on as an additional layer," Amin said.

Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/nf/20040217/b_s_nf/23185

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Chemical Sector

3. *February 17, Associated Press* — **Tractor trailer rig crash causes spill on U.S. 61. A tractor-trailer rig overturned Tuesday, February 17, on U.S. 61, northeast of Natchez, MS, and spilled about 3,000 gallons of hydrogen peroxide, closing the highway and forcing some people out of their homes.** "Unfortunately, the hydrogen peroxide has run off into a stream and is creating vapors," said Highway Patrol Sgt. Rod Crawford. Michael Hunter of Memphis, TN, was transporting the volatile chemical when he lost control and the tanker overturned about 6:30 a.m. along the Adams-Jefferson county line, said Crawford. Traffic on the highway was rerouted while cleanup was underway. Hunter, a driver for Quality Carriers, was not seriously injured. Crews from the Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) were at the scene. Local fire departments used water to dilute the hydrogen peroxide pooled along the highway. Local emergency management officials reported that four houses and one business were evacuated due to the spill. Red Cross officials are

working with those who have been displaced. Hydrogen peroxide is a colorless liquid dissolved in water. In its concentrated form, vapors are irritating to the eyes and mucous membranes. The tractor-trailer was en route to St. Francisville, LA, officials said.

Source: <http://www.sunherald.com/mld/sunherald/news/politics/7972578.htm>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

4. *February 17, The Daily Herald (WA)* — **Fighter jet for sale on eBay. A brokerage firm is offering a Blue Angels jet for sale on auction site eBay, that is raising concern from the government. Mike Landa and Associates is offering the only privately owned F/A-18-1 in the world for sale to the highest bidder. Bidding is scheduled to end at 2 p.m. Thursday, February 19. Landa said agents from the FBI, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the Department of Homeland Security visited him last week to verify that the plane was authentic and couldn't be used for combat. However, he said, they didn't contest Landa's right to sell it on eBay.** Landa said a man bought the plane four or five years ago. Normally, the Navy cuts off the wings and cuts the body of its planes in half to make them unusable, then sells the parts for aluminum scrap, he said, but the military made a mistake. "It was coded incorrectly at a government auction and sold for scrap, but it was not cut," Landa said. It's not the only plane he is selling. Landa is also offering a Russian MiG-29 fighter plane, and will soon be putting an F-16 fighter plane on eBay.

Source: <http://www.heraldnet.com/Stories/04/2/17/18201303.cfm>

5. *February 17, Associated Press* — **Over six thousand deploy under new Navy strategy. The seven-ship USS Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG), with about 6,300 sailors and Marines, shipped out Tuesday, February 17, as part of a new Navy strategy that focuses on more battle groups with fewer ships to create a more nimble force. This ESG sailed Tuesday from Norfolk, VA, for a six-month cruise to the Mediterranean Sea and Persian Gulf. "After the terrorist attacks on 9-11 ... the Navy senior leadership felt that there was a requirement to organize differently in order to provide a more responsive presence and a more flexible presence — as well as a more lethal presence," said Capt. Steven C. Joachim, commander of the Wasp ESG. With the changing threat environment, there's no longer a need for the Navy's traditional large battle groups designed to fight big forces in deep water.** Under the new strategy, aircraft carrier groups now have about half of the 10 to 12 ships they used to. With the ESG, the fire power of two cruisers, a destroyer and an attack submarine has been added to the old Amphibious Ready Group of three amphibious ships that would transport Marines to hotspots.

Source: <http://www.wavy.com/Global/story.asp?S=1644829&nav=23iiKscR>

6. *February 11, U.S. Northern Command* — **Exercise Unified Defense 04 Announced. The United States Northern Command will conduct Unified Defense 04, a major exercise designed to allow the command, Fifth Army, Joint Task Force Alaska and associated units to practice the Homeland Defense and Military Support to Civil Authorities missions. The exercise will run from February 19-25. A series of simulated natural disasters and simulated terrorist activities will take place during the exercise. Events include a Category IV hurricane, radiological events, maritime and port security events, and aerospace defense**

activities. Since most events are simulated, there will be few troop movements and little activity that will be apparent to the general public. This exercise will also incorporate a North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) exercise (Vigilant Overview 04-2) in a scenario that will pose aerospace defense challenges to exercise participants.

Source: <http://www.northcom.mil/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.showstory&storyid=9BD49075-CAB4-A6A6-E77859D7E2EDB6EA>

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Banking and Finance Sector

7. *February 17, Australian Associated Press* — **Scam e-mails imitate police. Computer criminals are using e-mails claiming to be from Australian federal police to access the files of home internet users, the Australian High Tech Crime Center warned.** The center's acting director, Nigel Phair, said false e-mails claiming to be from federal police were being sent to the public. The e-mail asks if the receiver is aware they are being investigated by police. It asks "is that true?" and then "have you really committed such crimes?" before encouraging people to click on two links for further details. **Once the user clicks on those links, their keystrokes may be traced, enabling the sender of the e-mail to record information such as online bank passwords.** Phair said it was the first time the AHTCC had seen such an e-mail claiming to be from a law enforcement agency. The center is investigating the origin of the bogus e-mail.

Source: <http://australianit.news.com.au/articles/0.7204.8707873%5E15319%5E%5Enbv%5E15306.00.html>

8. *February 17, Finextra.com* — **E-mail fraud and phishing growing in incidence and sophistication. E-mail fraud and phishing attacks grew by more than 50% in January, with an average of 5.7 new, unique attacks sent out to millions of consumers each day. In January, there were 176 new, unique phishing attacks reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (APWG), a consortium founded late last year. The company most targeted by the fraudsters was online auctioneer eBay with the most targeted industry sector being financial services. Citibank was the second most attacked company in January with 35 scams hijacking its brand. Eight per cent of the reported phishing schemes took advantage of the recently patched Microsoft IE browser vulnerability that allows Website addresses to be disguised. The APWG warns that scams designed to fool recipients into downloading keyloggers and other Trojan programs represent an emerging threat, and illustrate the growing sophistication of the fraudsters.**

Source: <http://www.finextra.com/topstory.asp?id=11196>

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Transportation Sector

9. *February 17, The Trucker* — **TRIP calls for national freight policy to deal with concerns.** By 2020, freight movement is projected to increase by 50 percent, and a new study says the country's roads and interstates can't handle that much more traffic without such improvements

as truck-only lanes. **The new report by The Road Information Program (TRIP) is called "America's Rolling Warehouses: The impact of increased trucking on economic development, congestion and traffic safety."** Published February 10, the report calls for a national freight policy and includes TRIP's proposals on what to do to deal with the U.S. Department of Transportation's projected 50 percent increase in freight movement from 2003 to 2020. Long-term reauthorization of federal surface transportation legislation offers an opportunity for a significant increase in funding for improvements that would help safely accommodate the anticipated increase in truck traffic by 2020, the report further stated. Source: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/02_04/0217_freight_policy.html

10. *February 17, The Trucker* — **EPA, carriers, shippers partner to reduce air pollution. The Environmental Protection Agency has joined 52 freight shippers and carriers to promote the SmartWay Transport Partnership to reduce air pollution.** "America has always counted on the freight industry to deliver the goods — in joining in this partnership, you will deliver them in a new, smarter way," said EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt. According to information provided on the EPA Web site, surveys have found that 70 percent to 80 percent of truck drivers cite the need for heating or air conditioning as the main reason for idling. **The goal is to reduce between 33 million to 66 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions and up to 200,000 tons of nitrogen oxide emissions per year, by 2012.** At the same time, the initiative will result in fuel savings of up to 150 million barrels of oil annually, it's estimated. Source: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/02_04/0216_smart_way.html

11. *February 17, Florida Times Union* — **Feds: CSX most dangerous of top freight railroads.** CSX Transportation (CSXT) was the most dangerous of the nation's four biggest freight railroads for most of 2003, according to government statistics. **The Jacksonville, FL-based company led that pack with the highest rate of employee injuries per 200,000 hours worked for the first 11 months of 2003,** according to the most recent data available from the Federal Railroad Administration, which oversees the nation's railroads. And CSXT also had the most train derailments, collisions and other calamities through November. **CSXT isn't sure exactly what caused the inflated accident and injury rates. One theory is that, after several years of improving safety statistics, the company became complacent.** "We weren't as focused on the improvement processes as much as we needed to be," spokesperson Adam Hollingsworth said in an interview. One of the more serious accidents last quarter occurred in Kentucky. A CSXT employee was riding a rail car while switching it to another train, a common practice. Only he fell, passing under the car's sharp, steel wheels. Both of the employee's legs had to be amputated, said Robert Bernard, the company's chief safety officer. From January 2003 through November, the railroad had four fatalities, one more than during the same period in 2002. Source: http://cnni.wyellowbrix.com/pages/cnni.w/Story.nsp?story_id=47192573&ID=cnni.w&scategory=Transportation:Rail&

12. *February 17, New York Times* — **FAA says it has way to avert airline fuel tank explosions.** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said today, February 17, that it hoped to propose a rule this fall that would require the airlines to cut the risk of fuel tank explosions like the one that destroyed T.W.A. Flight 800. **The rule would take effect in 2006, 10 years after the T.W.A. Boeing 747 crashed off Long Island, killing 230 people, and would have a seven-year phase-in period. It would cover about 3,800 big jets registered in the United**

States and built by Boeing and Airbus. The agency is in discussions with European regulators, but has reached no agreement with them. In December 2002, the FAA demonstrated an onboard system that takes compressed air from the plane engines and uses it to remove some of the oxygen from ordinary air, thus raising the level of inert nitrogen, if only fractionally. That nitrogen is then pumped into the fuel tanks. "We're taking this step because we have found a practical solution," the FAA administrator, Marion C. Blakey, said. Airlines could still oppose the FAA solution, however, because of the costs. Installation would probably cost \$140,000 to \$220,000 per plane, officials said, plus another \$14,000 annually for operating costs, which is high but not a record for the agency.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/02/17/politics/17CND-FUEL.html?ex=1077685200&en=a6919999ea77849f&ei=5062&partner=GOOGLE>

13. *February 17, The Daily Sentinel (Grand Junction, CO)* — **Derailment puts Amtrak trains on other routes.** Railroad tracks through Glenwood Canyon, CO, remained closed Monday and officials said Amtrak passenger train service would be rerouted until Wednesday, February 18, at the earliest after a Sunday coal train derailment. In all, 41 cars and two locomotives of the 105-car Union Pacific train went off the tracks Sunday at about 12:30 p.m., near the Grizzly Creek rest area, railroad spokesman John Bromley said. No one was injured and authorities were still investigating the cause. "We brought in our heavy equipment at 4 a.m. (Monday) and they'll work on getting the cars off the tracks so we can start repairs," Bromley said. "Then we'll see what Wednesday brings." **The crash forced Amtrak to reroute the California Zephyr, which makes two stops a day in Glenwood Springs, through Wyoming. Bromley said. Amtrak will continue to send the Zephyr that way on Tuesday. No busses were scheduled to take Amtrak passengers through Colorado.** Each train car carried 110 tons of coal, which was strewn over the tracks and riverbank but did not apparently reach the Colorado River, witnesses said.

Source: <http://www.gjsentinel.com/news/newsfd/auto/feed/news/2004/02/17/1077025140.26609.6194.8641.html:COXnetJSessionID=AyX2VnKNZH3OGdU7TGVSYRpj2Pd9hDwJ4oD2jdfEns1xCJEZvWz5!39200499?urac=n&curvf=10770575347890.006482645696397005->

14. *February 17, KRT Wire* — **Airlines consider going back to private screeners. Several U.S. airports are considering a return to private security companies in hopes of cutting waiting times and passenger hassles.** In the wake of September 11, 2001, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) installed federal screeners at 424 commercial airports, saying they would be higher paid, better educated and more effective in finding dangerous items than private screeners. **But now airports — including Fort Lauderdale and Miami — are studying whether private security would allow more control in the hiring and training of screeners and, ultimately, whether the security workforce could be increased.** Also, airports hope to have more say in where screeners would be stationed, allowing more staffing at the busiest checkpoints. **Under an "opt-out" provision of the federal Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which established the TSA, airports can request private screeners as of November.** However, Congress might disallow private security after it receives an assessment this spring from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the General Accounting Office.

Source: <http://www.sunherald.com/mld/sunherald/news/nation/7973132.htm>

Postal and Shipping Sector

15. *February 17, PDF Zone* — **A new anti-terrorism weapon.** On February 2, the poison Ricin was discovered in a letter sent to a Senator in Washington, DC. While no known biological or chemical attacks have been attempted through the U.S. Postal Service since the anthrax scare of 2001, the Postal Service reports that people send unidentified white powders through the mail daily. Most turn out to be common household substances. **One possible defense against mail-borne attacks, said members of the House Committee on Administration, is PDF. Already in development since the anthrax scare of 2001, the government's "d-mail" program gets mail delivered to legislators electronically via PDF attachments from paper scans made at a Leesburg, VA, site.** The committee indicates that the program will be expanded to include 25 House members receiving mail via updated software that includes more robust search functions. It also logs the names and addresses of mail senders. **All mail to Congress currently is irradiated before it arrives at Capitol Hill. Changing to a PDF delivery system, said Committee Chairman Bob Ney (R-OH), is the "second step" in defending against mail attacks.**

Source: http://www.pdfzone.com/news/868-PDFzone_news.html

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Agriculture Sector

16. *February 17, Associated Press* — **New form of mad cow disease discovered. Italian scientists have found a second form of mad cow disease that more closely resembles the human Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) than the usual cow form of the illness.** The brain-wasting diseases bovine spongiform encephalopathy, also known as mad cow disease, and human CJD are caused by different forms of mutant proteins called prions. The team of Italian researchers reports that a study of eight cows with mad cow disease found that two of them had brain damage resembling the human victims of CJD. They said the cows were infected with prions that resembled those involved in the standard form of the human disease, called sporadic CJD, not the variant caused by eating infected meat. **Salvatore Monaco, lead author of the new study, said the findings may indicate that cattle can also develop a sporadic form of the disease, but it might also be a new food-borne form of the illness.** Both the human and cattle diseases cause holes to form in the brain. The Italian researchers found that, in addition to the holes, two cows had an accumulation of amyloid plaque in their brains. Amyloid plaques are an indication of Alzheimer's disease in humans. They have also been found in people with sporadic CJD but had not been found in cattle, the researchers said. Source: <http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/nation/7969928.htm>

17. *February 17, Associated Press* — **Tests confirm two new viruses in onions.** Scientists have confirmed two new viruses, one possibly brought in on Peruvian onions, in Georgia's \$75 million crop of sweet Vidalia onions, but it may take several growing seasons to determine the full impact of the attack. **Stephen Mullis, virology coordinator for the University of Georgia Extension Service, said he has examined about 3,000 Vidalia samples since October and has identified two previously unknown viruses in the crop: tomato spotted wilt and Iris**

yellow spot. "It's potentially a problem," said Alex Csinos, a plant pathologist at the university's Coastal Plain Experiment Station. "How extensive it is, we don't know. How debilitating it will be, that also is unknown." Scientists will monitor the Vidalia crop to track the spread of the viruses, their intensity and the effects, a process that could take years. Both viruses are spread by tiny insects known as thrips that infect plants when they bite into them to feed. The most common thrips in Georgia are tobacco thrips and western flower thrips. Now there's a third, onion thrips, believed to have come in on Peruvian onions imported during the offseason by Vidalia growers. **The discovery of yellow spot in Georgia underscores the risk of foreign plant diseases entering the U.S. on imported fruits and vegetables, Csinos said.**

Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20040217/ap_on_bi_ge/farm_scene_1

18. *February 17, Reuters* — **Japan, China report new outbreaks of bird flu. Japan confirmed a new outbreak of bird flu Tuesday, thwarting its plans to declare an end to the scourge there, while China confirmed two more outbreaks among poultry in a central province.** The cases came a day after hard-hit Thailand's hopes of declaring victory in its war against the disease were dashed after it reported fresh outbreaks of the virulent H5N1 strain in nine provinces. **"This thing is still not under control," Hans Wagner, a senior official with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said. "We have outbreaks in new geographical regions and recurring outbreaks where we had bird flu already."** In Japan, an Agriculture Ministry official said the fresh outbreak was reported at the southern end of the main island of Honshu, just a day before Japan expected to declare its sole outbreak of the virus over. China confirmed Tuesday two outbreaks of the H5N1 strain among poultry in central Hunan province. **It could take a couple of years to be sure H5N1 was no longer a threat, said the FAO, which repeated in a statement on Tuesday the epidemic "cannot be considered under control."**

Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=571&ncid=751&e=1&u=/nm/20040217/hl_nm/birdflu_dc

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Food Sector

19. *February 17, Business Wire* — **Cheese recalled. A voluntary national recall to all levels of distribution has been initiated by Schratter Foods Inc. for all imported Ile de France Brie and Camembert cheese packed in aluminum tins.** The product is being recalled due to the label failing to mention "Keep Refrigerated." **Further the manufacturer failed to obtain Food and Drug Administration prior approval for its manufacturing process. The product has the potential to be contaminated with Clostridium Botulinum.** C. Botulinum can cause serious and sometimes-fatal infections in young children, elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. All consumer packages of the product packed in the metal tins are affected regardless of the code date on the package. No illnesses have been reported to date. The recall was prompted as a result of routine import sampling program conducted by the Food and Drug Administration.

Source: http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20040217005835&newsLang=en

Water Sector

20. *February 17, Times Herald* — **River spill alarm shuts water intakes. Water plants in Michigan and Ontario, Canada, have shut down their St. Clair River intakes in response to a possible chemical spill from Dow Chemical's Sarnia plant.** A spill has not been confirmed by investigators from Dow or Ontario's Ministry of Environment, but water-plant operators said the water was safe to use because they closed before any polluted water would have passed their intakes. **All plants were expected to have resumed drawing water by early February 17.** The spill comes more than two weeks after Imperial Oil in Ontario's St. Clair Township dumped 42,000 gallons of toxic chemical solvents into the St. Clair River. More than a dozen water plants shut down after that spill. Monday's closures came after an alarm sounded at 7 a.m. on a water-quality outfall sensor at the plant. Plant spokesman Allan Ebert said the facility notified the Ministry of Environment about 8 a.m., who in turn notified U.S. authorities. Ebert said investigations inside the plant and in the water show no signs of leakage of the plant's main chemical, ethylene oxide. The company still is investigating why the alarm sounded.

Source: <http://www.thetimesherald.com/news/stories/20040217/localnews/428560.html>

21. *February 16, University of Georgia* — **Discovery could lead to better treatment for cryptosporidium.** In 1993, a water-borne parasite in Milwaukee was responsible for an estimated 403,000 cases of acute gastrointestinal disease. **The parasite, *Cryptosporidium parvum*, is highly resistant to standard water treatment, which has caused additional concerns over its potential use in bioterrorism.** A team of biologists from the University of Georgia, led by Boris Striepen, has discovered that the parasite depends on so-called "salvage enzymes" to steal away nutrients from its host to survive. This discovery provides new targets for drugs designed to treat victims of this parasitic disease for which there is currently no effective cure. **Outbreaks of disease caused by the parasite are not uncommon in the United States and other industrialized nations, and *Cryptosporidium* has become the most important contaminant found in drinking water.** In 2000 and 2001, there were three drinking-water-associated outbreaks in Northern Ireland, for instance, and several hundred cases of illness discovered. "One of the strengths of this research is that it combines bioinformatics and experimental testing in the laboratory," said Striepen. "Using both approaches, we got to solid conclusions fast."

Source: http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2004-02/uog-dcl021204.php

Public Health Sector

22. *February 17, Agence France Presse* — **WHO optimistic on flu. The World Health Organization (WHO) said Tuesday that it was increasingly confident that the bird flu virus that has killed 20 people in Asia would not cause major human casualties in its current form.** "We are increasingly optimistic that we will not get a major outbreak," said

Bjorn Melgaard, WHO's representative in Thailand. The bird flu virus has hit 10 Asian nations, but human infections have only been reported in Thailand and Vietnam, with 6 and 14 deaths respectively and dozens more suspected cases still being tested. "We now have nearly one month behind us of lessons where the number of cases has only increased very, very slowly," Melgaard said. "In Vietnam it's the same pattern, so we would expect that there might be additional cases among those that are currently under investigation, but we would not expect an explosion in the number of human cases." However, Melgaard said there was still a real fear that bird flu could combine with an easily transmissible human influenza to create a deadly pathogen that could kill millions of people. "We still have as the major concern of the WHO this transformation, the shift into a new virus that would have the potential to cause a pandemic," he said.

Source: <http://www.iht.com/articles/129966.htm>

23. *February 17, New Scientist* — **Bioterror simulations back targeted treatment.** A bioterror attack on the U.S. should be tackled through containment and targeted treatment rather than mass vaccination, according to new computer simulations. Emory University scientist Ira Longini simulated an outbreak of smallpox resulting from an attack initially targeting about 500 people in a population of 48,000. Under current U.S. policy, any smallpox attack would be dealt with by a policy of containment and selective vaccination. Once the outbreak was identified, the authorities would quarantine everyone exposed during the initial attack and then try to trace everyone who had subsequent contact with them. All these people would be vaccinated to try to prevent them falling ill. **Previous modelling work, carried out at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in July 2002, had suggested that mass vaccination would be the most effective way of controlling an outbreak. But Longini, who says he studied an outbreak on a more detailed scale, found the spread of the virus could be controlled adequately if the containment process began quickly.** "If you isolate the first few cases you should only get about 100 more cases," he said. Longini's study also showed containment to be more important than vaccination in the early stages of an outbreak.

Source: <http://www.newscientist.com/news/news.jsp?id=ns99994690>

24. *February 16, University of Chicago Medical Center* — **Approved drug blocks deadly anthrax toxin. Researchers at the University of Chicago have found that a drug approved in 2002 for treatment of chronic hepatitis B can block the action of an anthrax toxin.** A team led by Wei-Jen Tang of the University of Chicago has shown that in vitro adefovir dipivoxil can effectively reduce the effects of edema factor, one of the two deadly toxins produced by anthrax. "These toxins pack a one-two punch that makes inhalational anthrax extremely harmful," said Tang. **"For the first time, we have a clinically approved drug that, at least in tissue culture, completely eradicates half of that toxic team, and does it at non-toxic doses."** The toxins, edema factor and lethal factor, as well as a molecular escort called protective antigen that helps the toxins enter cells, are what make anthrax deadly. In the early stages of an infection, edema factor interferes with the host's immune response, allowing the bacteria to spread, multiply and produce more toxins. Later, edema factor causes massive tissue damage. Because adefovir is such a precise match to its target, it may require only small amounts of the drug to effectively block edema factor. How much difference adefovir might make in treating inhalational anthrax in humans is still untested. Although anthrax makes two toxins, they work together.

Source: http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2004-02/uocm-adb021104.php

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Government Sector

25. *February 13, Government Executive Magazine* — **Homeland Security unveils performance pay plan. Homeland Security Department officials said Friday, February 13, that they want to transfer as many as 8,000 employees to a performance-based pay system in fiscal 2005.** The change to the department's personnel system is set to be the first small step in a dramatic overhaul, which will eventually affect 110,000 DHS employees if it is approved in its present form. Homeland Security officials want the majority of the department operating in a system that rewards high performers with better pay and pushes those who do not meet performance requirements out the door. About 70,000 DHS employees would be exempted from the system. Homeland Security officials said the exempted personnel, including uniformed military personnel, administrative law judges and Transportation Security Administration personnel, have different statutory authorities governing their personnel systems. The department is requesting \$12.5 million in next year's budget proposal to provide performance pay for the first 8,000 personnel set to be switched to a performance pay system. Those employees will primarily be from the Homeland Security headquarters and from the nonmilitary, nonwage-grade Coast Guard ranks.

Source: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0204/021304d1.htm>

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Emergency Services Sector

26. *February 13, National Journal's Technology Daily* — **Homeland Security to bolster intergovernmental communications.** The Homeland Security Department in the "near future" plans to deploy better technologies to strengthen communications among federal, state and local officials, a top official said on Friday, February 13. **Frank Libutti, Homeland Security's undersecretary for information analysis and infrastructure protection, said the department plans to refine technology used in its current operations center and deploy an integrated communications system to share information with state and local officials.** The technology will include hardware and software, he told reporters after a speech to state emergency-management officials in Washington. Libutti said the current federal operation center does not need fixed, but the department plans to improve the system to more rapidly observe and respond to homeland security situations. Currently, the center supports Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge and his deputies, including Libutti, by providing information and situational awareness, but it does not provide a "common operational picture" across the department, Libutti said.

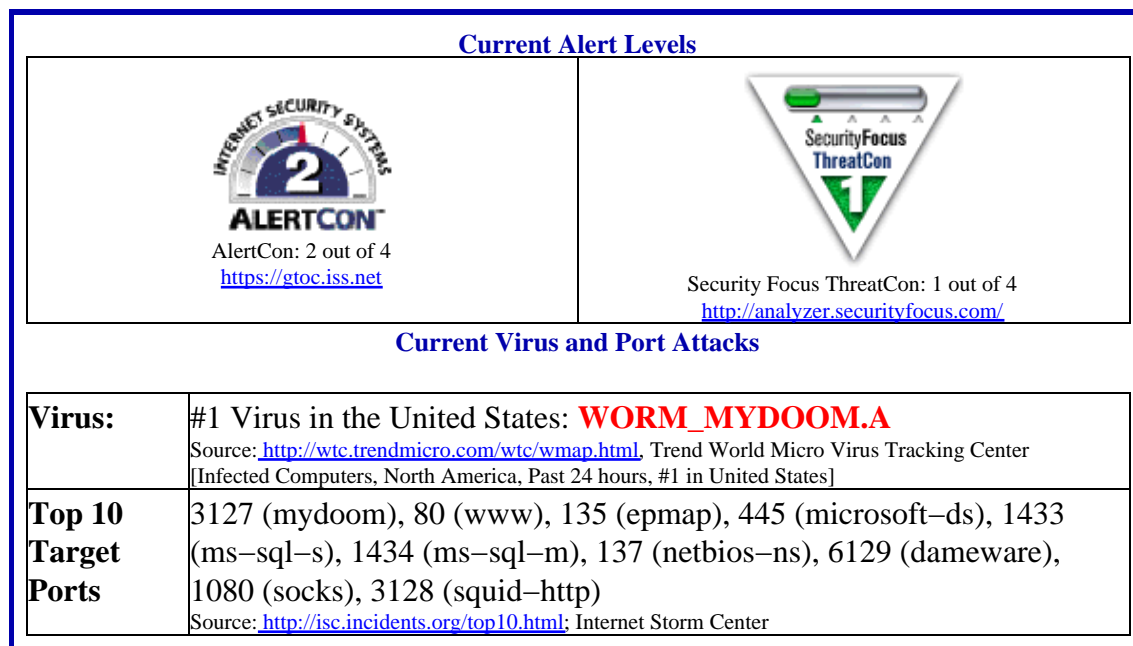
Source: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0204/021304tdpm2.htm>

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Information and Telecommunications Sector

Nothing to report.

Internet Alert Dashboard



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General Sector

27. *February 17, Independent (United Kingdom)* — **EU plans huge boost in security spending. Plans to provide up to \$2.5 billion a year of European Union (EU) funds for defense and security research were presented Monday, raising the prospect of Europe spending as much as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.** A host of potential EU research projects, from intelligence-sharing and surveillance to efforts to combat bioterrorism, have been outlined in a report compiled by defense and security experts for two European commissioners. A new EU security research program designed to boost the EU's technological ability to mount limited military operations, combat terrorism, and police its own borders should be created, the experts suggest. An EU armaments agency is already being set up with the job of improving military capabilities and co-ordinating procurement projects. **The areas of research listed include developing new communications networks, improving access to space, and forging smoother technical links between agencies in different countries.** At present, only \$83 million has been made available from the EU's research budget over three years. Pushing spending up to \$2.5 billion a year would require the support of all EU member states when they decide the next spending round which will last from 2007–13.
Source: <http://news.independent.co.uk/europe/story.jsp?story=492122>

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DHS/IAIP Publications – DHS/IAIP Daily Reports, CyberNotes, Information Bulletins, and other publications

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